

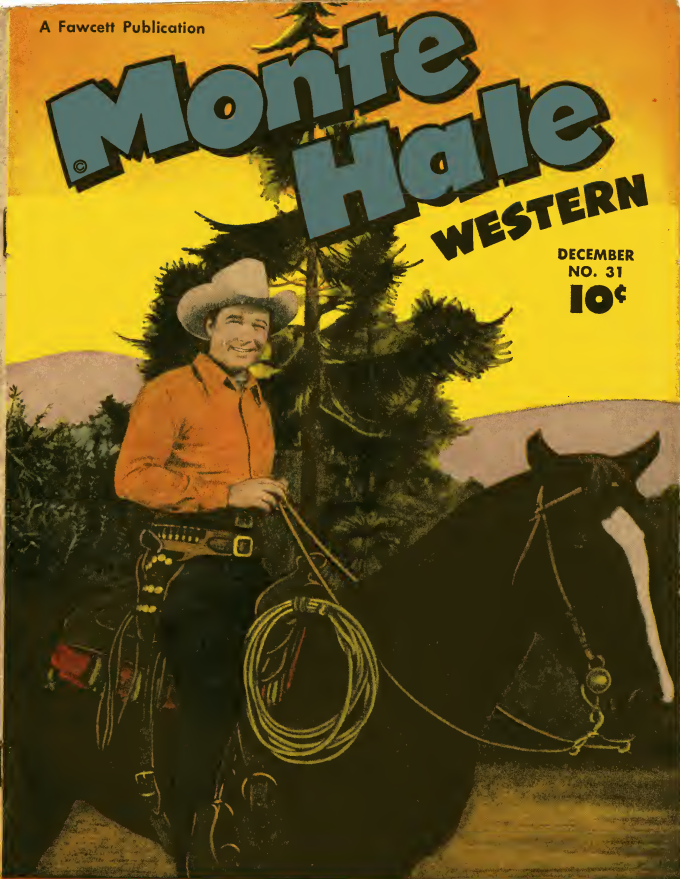
A Fawcett Publication

Monte Hale

WESTERN

DECEMBER
NO. 31

10¢



ON ADVENTURE'S TRAIL!

WITH THE WILD WEST'S ROVING COWBOY

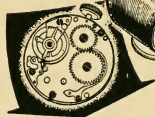
*As Indestructible—
As Accurate—As Unfailing as
Captain Marvel Himself!*

**Captain
Marvel**

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The Marvel Timepiece of
THE YEAR featuring the
new, unbreakable balance
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Features make
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the Best Watch
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THE MOST AMAZING

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MONTE HALE WESTERN

A Fawcett Publication

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PRESIDENT



IN THIS ISSUE

MONTE HALE

... IN ...

SONG OF MONTANA
GUNS AGAINST THE LAW

CATTLE DRIVE
GAMBLING GIRL

... PLUS ...

MANY INTERESTING SHORT FEATURES

... AND ...

AN EXCITING "GRAY HAWK" SHORT STORY

December, 1948. Vol. 6, No. 31

MONTE HALE WESTERN SUBSCRIPTION RATE 12 ISSUES FOR \$1.20 IN U. S., POSSESSIONS, AND CANADA

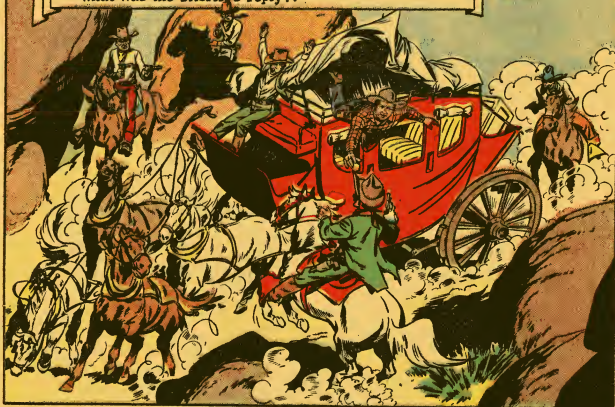
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MONTE HALE

in *Guns Against
The LAW*

Slowly MONTE put down the black mask. He raised his hands and said --- "Sheriff, **ARREST ME!**" Why? And what was the Sheriff's reply??



A LONG A TEXAS STAGECOACH TRAIL...

ANY SIGN
OF THEM,
CLARK?

NOT YET,
MONTE!



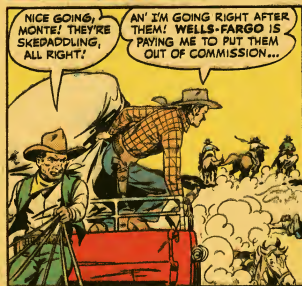
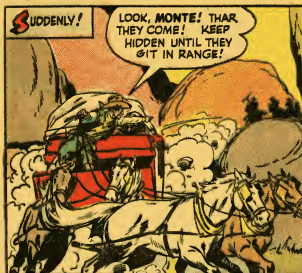
BUT WHEN THEY DO SHOW
UP, THEY'RE DUE FOR
A S'PRISE!

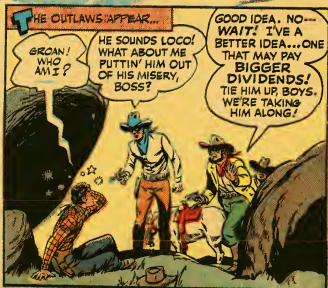
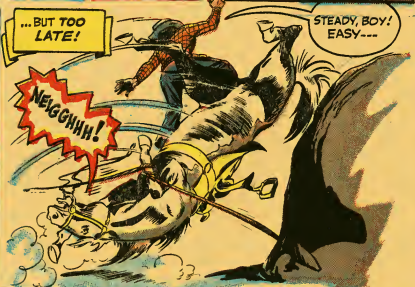
THAT'S WHAT
WELLS-FARGO
HIRED ME FOR ---
TO STOP TH'
BANDITS THAT'VE
BEEN RAIDING
THE COACH
LINE!



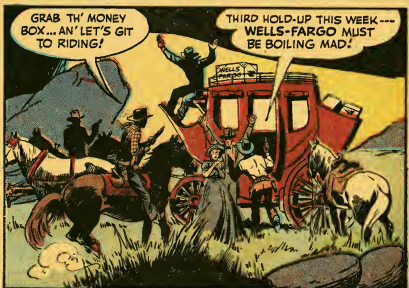
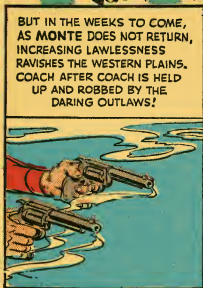
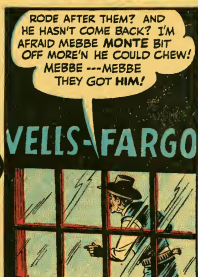
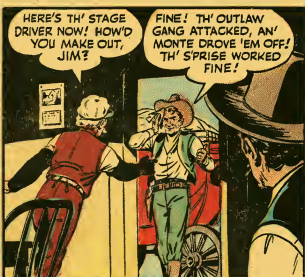
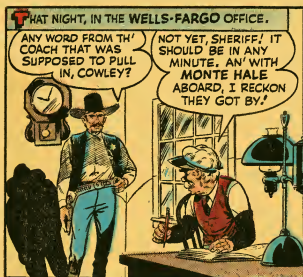
BUT I SURE WISH I
KNEW A BETTER WAY
TO DO IT THAN TO HIDE
UNDER A CANVAS SHEET
ON A HOT DAY
LIKE THIS!

SO THAT'S WHAT MONTE
IS DOING... LYING
IN WAIT FOR A BAND
OF OUTLAWS!!

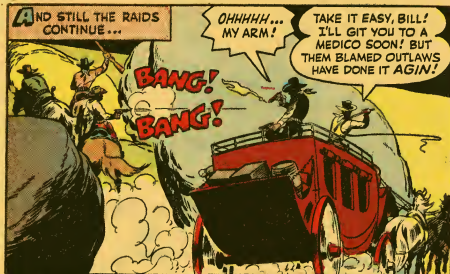




MONTE HALE WESTERN



MONTE HALE WESTERN



AND STILL THE RAIDS CONTINUE...

OHHHHH... MY ARM!

TAKE IT EASY, BILL! I'LL GIT YOU TO A MEDICO SOON! BUT THEM BLAMED OUTLAWS HAVE DONE IT AGIN!

SHERIFF, IF THIS KEEPS UP, WE'LL GO BANKRUPT!

San Marcos Coach... \$2,000 silver
Hedgeville Coach... \$1,000 payroll
Frontier Coach... \$1,500 silver
Arroyo Coach... \$1,000 greenbacks

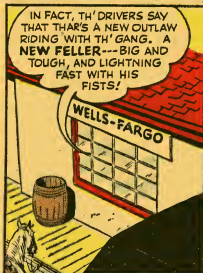


WELLS-FARGO HASN'T BROUGHT THROUGH A SAFE LOAD IN TWO WEEKS!

I TELL YOU, COWLEY, MY MEN ARE DOING TH' BEST THEY CAN, BUT THEY JUST CAIN'T PROTECT EV'RY STAGE!



SINCE MONTE HALE HAS DISAPPEARED, TH' RAIDERS HAVE BEEN BOLDER THAN EVER! I RECKON THEY DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT HIM ANY MORE!



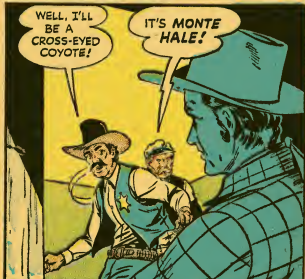
IN FACT, TH' DRIVERS SAY THAT THAR'S A NEW OUTLAW RIDING WITH TH' GANG. A NEW FELLER---BIG AND TOUGH, AND LIGHTNING FAST WITH HIS FISTS!



WE LOSE MONTE --- AND THEY GAIN A RECRUIT. SURE IS TOUGH!

COME IN!

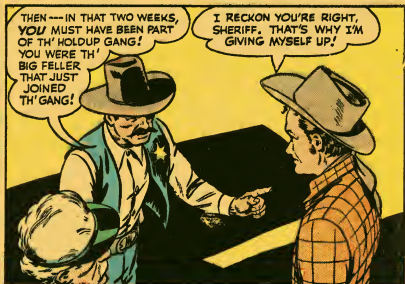
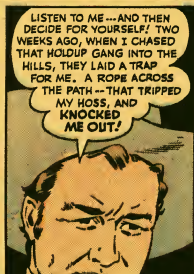
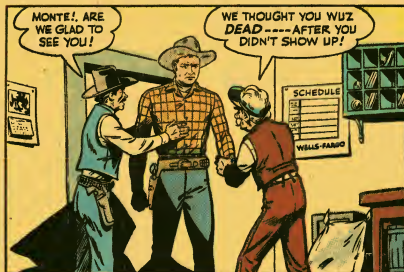
KNOCK!! KNOCK!!

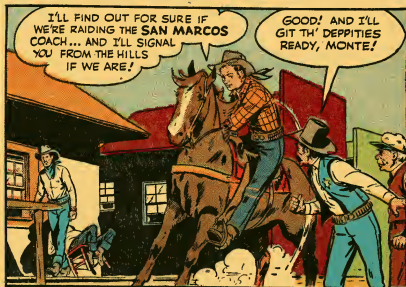
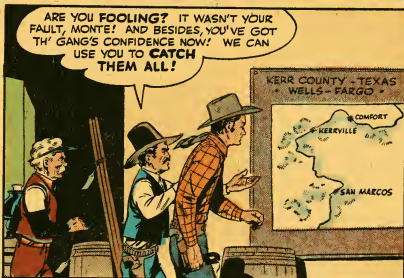
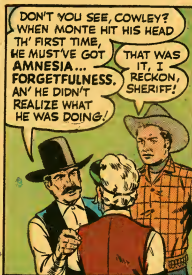


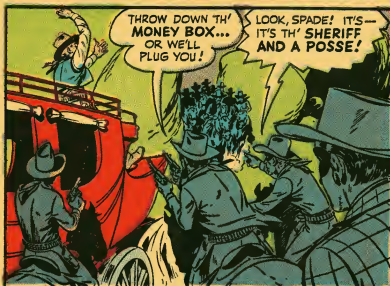
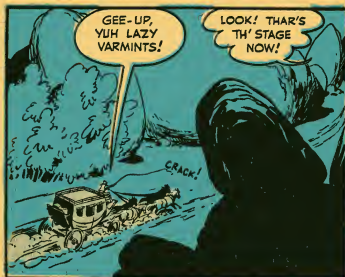
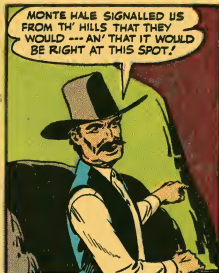
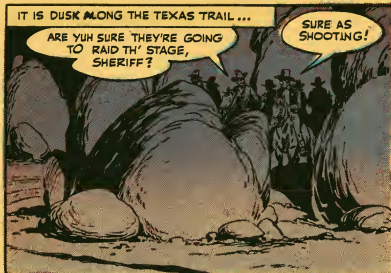
WELL, I'LL BE A CROSS-EYED COYOTE!

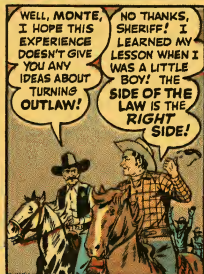
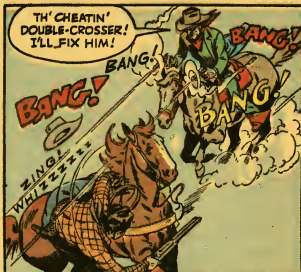
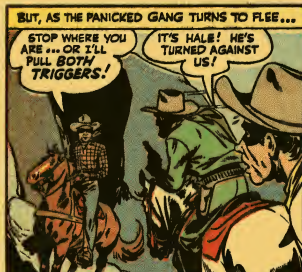
IT'S MONTE HALE!

MONTE HALE WESTERN









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WESTERN

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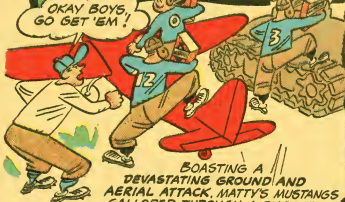
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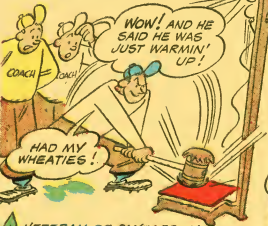


Matty BELL

COACH OF
SOUTHERN METHODIST
UNIVERSITY'S
1947 CONFERENCE CHAMPIONS



BOASTING A
DEVASTATING GROUND AND
AERIAL ATTACK, MATTY'S MUSTANGS
GALLOPED THROUGH A RUGGED
10-GAME SCHEDULE UNDEFEATED. PLAYED
THRILLING 13-13 TIE WITH POWERFUL
PENN. STATE IN COTTON BOWL GAME.



A VETERAN OF 21 YEARS IN
TOUGH SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE,
COACH MATTY BELL BELIEVES THAT
EXPERIENCE OR "KNOW HOW" COUNTS
HEAVILY IN ATHLETIC CONTESTS.
TRAINING AND EATING RIGHT
IMPORTANT, TOO. MATTY SAYS, "A
TRAINING DISH I RECOMMEND IS
ONE I'VE ENJOYED FOR YEARS
MYSELF - A BIG BOWLFUL OF MILK,
FRUIT AND WHEATIES, 'BREAKFAST
OF CHAMPIONS'."

WHEATIES "BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS"

WITH MILK AND FRUIT

NAT'L CHAMPIONSHIP

BELL "RANG THE GONG" HIS FIRST YEAR
AT S.M.U. HIS GREAT 1935 TEAM WON
NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP. UNDEFEATED
AND UNTIED, MATTY'S BOYS WERE ONLY
TEAM EVER TO REPRESENT SOUTHWEST
CONFERENCE IN ROSE BOWL.

NO SUBSTITUTE
FOR EXPERIENCE
AND -

WHEATIES



"Wheaties" and "Breakfast of Champions" are registered trade marks of General Mills, Inc.

OLD SLICK

TOO MUCH

LOOK AT BIG BRAD! HE'S A WISE ACRE! EVERYTIME THAR'S WORK TUH BE DONE, HE GOES, TUH SLEEP!



C'MON, GIT UP!

HUH? WHUT'S THE--
--OH, IT'S YUH, OLD SLICK!



GRRR, I DONT LIKE TO BE AWAKENED LIKE THET, SEE? IF YUH DO THET ONE MORE TIME, I'M AGONNA KNOCK YORE TEETH OUT!

LISTEN, YUH WINDBAG, IF YUH EVER TRIED I'D BREAK YUH IN HALF!

BUT DONT WORRY. THAR'S ONE GOOD REASON WHY I WOULDN'T BREAK YUH IN HALF.

OH YEAH? WHUT'S THET?

IF I BROKE YUH IN HALF, THAR'D BE TWO OF YUH ---AND ONE LIKE YUH IS MORE THAN ENOUGH!



BRONKO BETSY

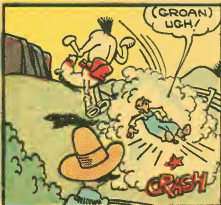
FUN-LOVING GAL

WHERE ARE I'M A GOING YUH GOIN' HOME, BETSY, EMILY? I HAVEN'T HAD ANY FUN ALL AFTERNOON!



STEADY, BOY, STEADY... OOPS, HE'S THROWIN' ME!

HUH?



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**Pour Salt in
Handkerchief!
Presto! It's
Vanished!**

Amazing!
"Disappearing
Coin Trick"

"Spring-and-Ring"
Oriental Magic Trick



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MONTE HALE

in
GAMBLING GIRL!

IT'S
MONTE
HALE!
PLUG HIM!

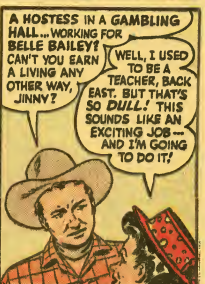
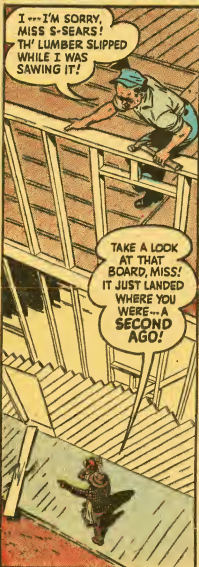
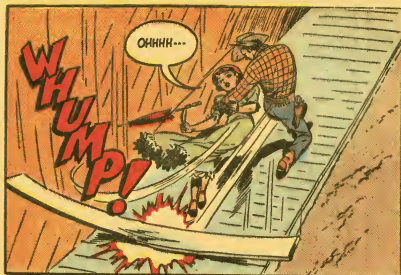
JINNY SEARS HAD
COME TO THE WEST,
LOOKING FOR ADVENTURE
AND ROMANCE! SHE
FOUND THEM... BUT IN A WAY
SHE NEVER EXPECTED!
AND SHE FOUND, TOO,
THAT THE LIFE OF A HOSTESS
IN A GAMBLING HALL TAKES
AS MANY STRANGE TURNS AS
THE BALL IN A ROULETTE
WHEEL!

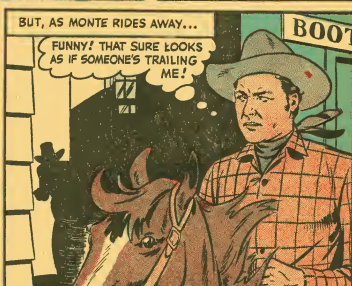
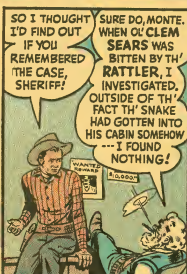
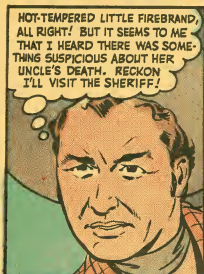
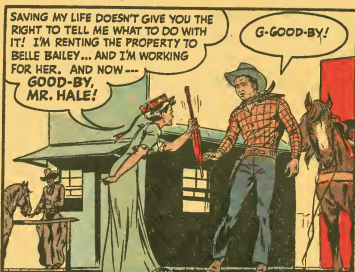
**RIDING DOWN THE MAIN STREET
OF CROWDER... IS MONTE HALE!**

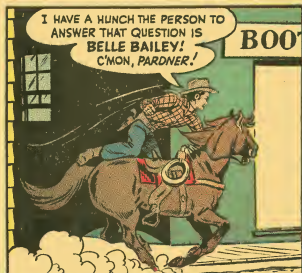
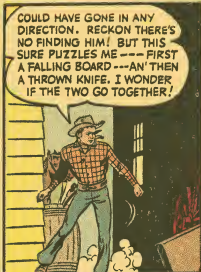
HMMM! THERE'S A NEW BUILDING GOING UP! THE TOWN SURE IS EXPANDING!

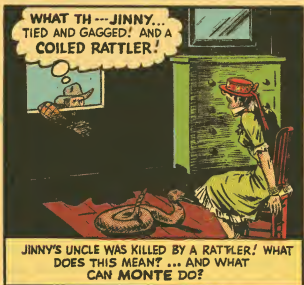
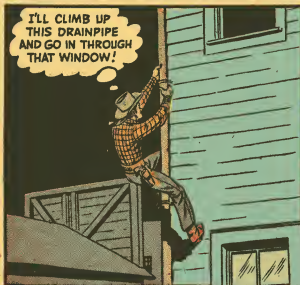
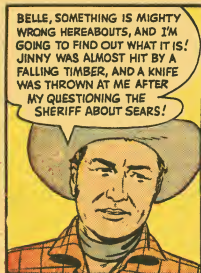
CRAWLING CACTUS!
THAT BOARD'S FALLING
RIGHT ON THAT
GIRL!

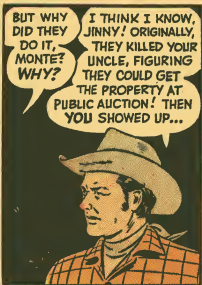
**GOT... TO...
SAVE
YOU!**

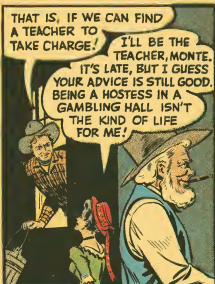
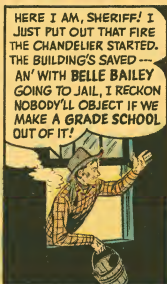












SAM TAKES
HIMSELF FOR
A RIDE

HERE'S WHY I CALLED
YOU, SAM. A GANG HAS
BEEN WRECKING MY TRUCKS
TO RUN ME OUT OF BUSINESS.
I WANT YOU TO INVESTIGATE.

GLAD TO HELP YOU,
BLACKIE! LET ME RIDE
ONE OF YOUR TRUCKS
TONIGHT.

I'M GOING TO BE
RIGHT AT HOME IN
HERE, EFFIE... LOOK
... MY FAVORITE
HAIR TONIC!

WE'LL
FOLLOW A
FEW MILES
BEHIND IN
CASE HE NEEDS
HELP, EFFIE!

JUST BE
CAREFUL,
SAM!

DASHIELL HAMMETT'S
**Adventures of
SAM SPADE**

LISTEN TO: "The Adventures of Sam Spade"
every Sunday evening on your Columbia (CBS)
station. See radio listing in your local newspaper.

MANY MILES LATER

GET OUT
OF THAT
CAB,
BUDDY!

TIE HIM UP,
MIKE! THEN LET'S
SEE IF THIS TRUCK'S
CARRYING ANYTHING
WORTH TAKING
BEFORE WE
WRECK IT!

HAVE A LITTLE
WILDROOT CREAM-OIL,
FELLOWS!

WHERE ARE
THEY, SAM?

UNDER THIS PILE OF
CASES, BLACKIE! LET'S
DIG 'EM OUT AND TURN
'EM IN!

HERE'S A CHECK
FROM BLACKIE FOR
CATCHING THOSE
GUYS, SAM. HE
SENT THIS BOX
TOO!

A CASE OF WILDROOT CREAM-OIL
HAIR TONIC! YOU TAKE THE
CHECK, EFFIE... I'M SATISFIED
JUST GETTING THIS.

SAM SPADE

CAN YOUR
SCALP PASS THE
FINGERNAIL
TEST?



TRY IT! Scratch
your head. If you
find signs of dry-
ness and loose,
vexing dandruff, you
need Wildroot Cream-
Oil hair tonic. Non-
alcoholic... contains soothing lanolin.
Get it today in bottles and tubes.





FOREST TRIAL

A GRAY HAWK Adventure

By Dick Kraus

THE FOREST NIGHT was black and forbidding. Gray Hawk, son of the chief of the Otapi, squared his shoulders and strode bravely into the darkness. Behind him he heard the cheerful laughter of the squaws, as they prepared their children for sleep; and the deeper voices of men, around the council fire.

Gray Hawk had never been away from the tribe for more than a few days at a time—and then always with several older men, on hunting parties. Now he was alone. And he would remain that way . . . until the moon that was full and golden overhead would vanish, and then grow again. It was his trial—the Otapi test of manhood!

"My son," his father had said, that afternoon, "you will go into the forest, armed only with a knife! For thirty suns, until the moon becomes full again, you will live by yourself. You will speak to no member of the tribe, and none will speak to you. Then you will return to the fire of the elders, and you will tell what has happened to you."

"And then?"

"Then," his father replied, "you will be judged. If it is decided that you have acted wisely and bravely, you will be made a warrior of the tribe. And now—go forth."

INTO THE FOREST he plunged, into the gathering night.

At first, Gray Hawk's feet followed the familiar paths, near the tepees of the village. Then, gradually, as his eager strides carried him through a valley and over a mountain ridge, the country became strange. Only the light of the moon guided his footsteps.

He crossed a frothy, bubbling stream, leaping from rock to rock. Then he started up again, threading his way past giant oak trees.

"I will travel until the moon is high overhead," he said softly to himself. "And then I will make camp."

Three hours later, he paused.

Lodged against a mountainside, deep in bristling thickets, was a huge boulder. One overreaching side formed a dry, sheltered cavern. Here, he decided, he would make

camp—with the keen-bladed knife that was to be his only weapon, his only tool.

Lopping off several saplings, and trimming them neatly, he planted them in the soft earth, leaning against the boulder. Several other pliant branches were woven into them. Then, over the lean-to, he piled thick, leafy boughs, forming a shelter against the wind and the rain. One side he left open. This would be his entrance.

But Gray Hawk did not yet enter the lean-to. Before he could sleep he needed first to collect some food.

He knew well the herbs and the edible greens of the forest. When still young he had been taught which fruits and berries were safe to eat.

But in order to live for a month, he would have to have meat and fish. He would need to catch game with no bow and arrow to aid him.

"I will make a snare," the Indian youth decided.

From the thicket, he quickly cut several long, thin switches. Binding them into a strong rope, he searched carefully along the ground. At last he found what he wanted — the almost imperceptible, narrow path along the bushes that indicated a rabbit runway.

Quickly, he formed a noose with the lariat he had made. Attaching the other end to a pulled-down branch, he dangled the loop over the rabbit path. A stone held it down. The stone would act as an easily disturbed trigger. He tested the trap once and it worked! Setting it again, he slipped quietly away. Lying in a thicket, thirty feet away, he watched patiently.

For several moments, he heard nothing but the faint cry of forest birds. Then, in the moonlight at one end of the clearing, he saw a blur of movement. It was a cottontail rabbit, springing with long hind legs over the grass. The rabbit approached the snare carelessly. Gray Hawk held his breath. Nearer and nearer the animal came—until it looked as if it could not avoid the noose and the trigger.

BUT then, just as it was about to touch the deadly stone, the cottontail paused. Its ears pricked up, listening, and it

froze in position.

Then, white tail high, it scampered for the protective underbrush. A moment later, it was out of sight.

Angrily, Gray Hawk clenched his fist. He had not made a sound! What then had warned the rabbit?

The answer came, as the Otapi boy's keen ears detected a distant murmur. At first it was nothing—just the crackling of a dry leaf, the wind moving the boughs. Then, gradually, he heard feet moving through the grass and the guttural sound of a foreign tongue. Springing to the shelter of a nearby oak, Gray Hawk froze, waiting.

He did not wait long.

FOR soon, swinging down through the forest in ground-covering strides, there came a file of warriors. They were dressed and painted for war, and from their daubed insignia, Gray Hawk recognized them. They were the Blacksnake tribe—deadly fighters of the plains! And their course was taking them through the forest in the direction of the Otapi village.

With a feeling of dread, Gray Hawk realized that the enemy war party was going to attack his settlement during the night.

He alone could warn his people. But he was forbidden by tribal law to speak to any member of the tribe! It was the law, and he was sworn to obey it for a full moon. How then could he save the Otapi from the enemy foray? What could he do?

With swift resolve, Gray Hawk made up his mind.

Moments after the last Blacksnake warrior passed him, he too darted into the forest. They had come far in the last day. They were tired. There was a chance that if he sped mightily, he could be at the village before them. Racing along a course parallel to the enemy warriors, he was careful not to make any noise. Then, knowing that he had gone past them, he sprinted, with less caution.

Speed was the important thing now. Speed and the precious moments it would bring. Leaping over fallen logs and rocks, ducking beneath low branches, he ran on. He came to the stream and crossed it again, this time with less care.

At last, heart pounding, and breath coming in agonizing spasms, Gray Hawk saw the tepees of the village looming up before him.

"But now," he gasped to himself, "how can I warn them? I must not speak to any member of the tribe!"

SUDDENLY, an idea came to him. He would not speak—but he would use an-

other language. It would be a language that he and the other young boys of the tribe spoke—the cries and grunts of the birds and animals of the forest. Many times he and his friends had used it in play. Now it was of deadly importance.

He crouched, and the cry of the screech owl came from his lips. "Hooo-eee! Hooo-eee!"

For a moment there was no reply. He tried again. Then there came a quick answer. "Hoo-eee! Hooo-eee!" One of the boys in the village had heard him, lying awake, and was quick to respond. Rapidly, Gray Hawk spoke, in the tongue of the forest creatures. He gave the warning, told of the enemy that was coming toward the village in the night. Again, he repeated the message. Then he fell silent.

There was nothing more he could do and he shivered as he waited in the dark. Had his warning been understood? Had the other boy roused the warriors of the tribe?

Soon, as he heard the rustling and furtive movements of the Blacksnake attackers, wriggling up to the village, he knew he would receive the answer.

And it came like a lightning bolt. Torches flamed into life. From behind every tree, up from every hollow in the ground, sprang Otapi warriors, brandishing weapons. In the night, Gray Hawk watched, as his tribesmen fell upon the amazed Blacksnake fighters. Expecting to carry out a surprise attack, the enemy braves were themselves ambushed. The battle lasted a few moments. Then, terrified and badly beaten, the Blacksnake warriors fled in panic, dropping their weapons, thinking only of saving their lives.

In the night, Gray Hawk's lips curled in a smile.

Without hesitating he turned his back on the village, and moved again into the forest. Behind him he heard cries of jubilation and celebrating. Perhaps the Otapi elders knew who had warned their tribe—who had saved them from deadly attack. Perhaps they did not know. It did not matter.

A NIGHT had gone by. Until the moon was full again, Gray Hawk would live in the forest. He would prove himself as a man!

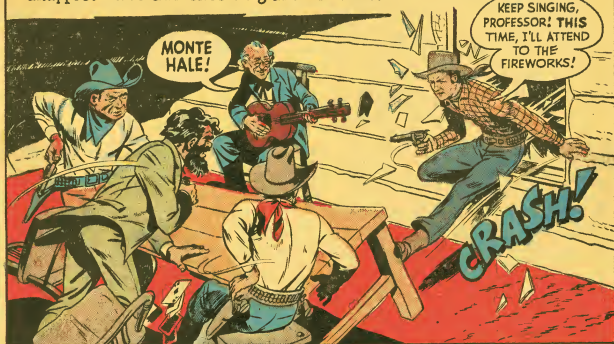
THE END

Thrill to the adventures of GRAY HAWK every month in MONTE HALE WESTERN!

MONTE HALE

in Song of Montana

Some folks thought that Monte Hale was just a guitar-playing fool! They figured that while Monte was strumming and singing... they could kidnap his friend, Professor Peabody, right out from under his nose! But, quick as a flash, Monte swapped his guitar for a gun, and soon made his unappreciative audience sing another tune!



A COMMON SIGHT IN THE OLD WEST-- MONTE HALE, RIDING ALONG, SINGING A SONG...



GIT ALONG, LITTLE DOGIES, GIT ALONG, GIT ALONG --- SAY! THAT'S THE COACH FROM SAN BARDOS-- AN' IT'S STOPPING REAL FAST!



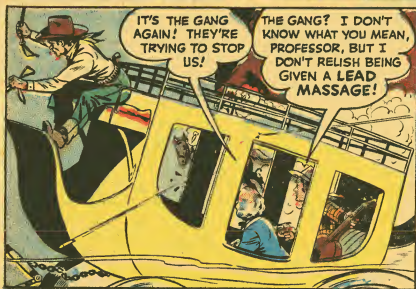
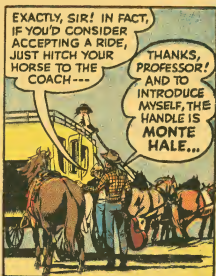
HOW COME YOU'RE STOPPING ON THE TRAIL, DRIVER?

ASK HIM, PARD! HE TOLD ME TO!

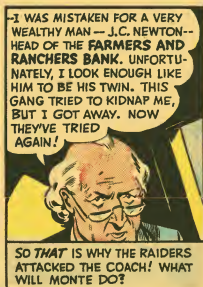
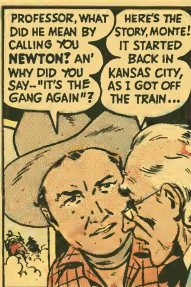
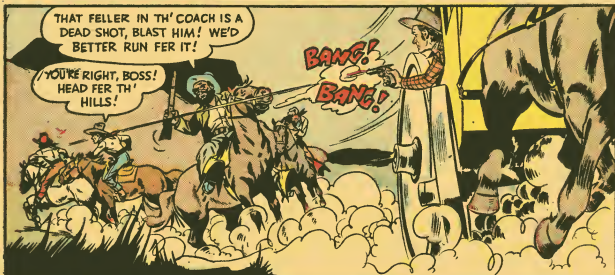
EXACTLY, MY YOUNG FRIEND. I HEARD YOU SINGING--- AND I ASKED HIM TO STOP THE COACH!

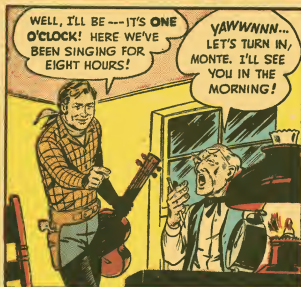
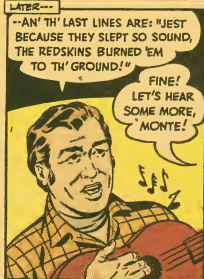
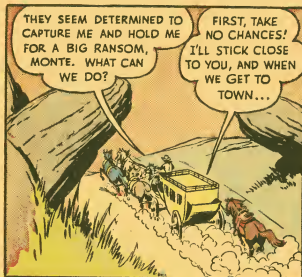


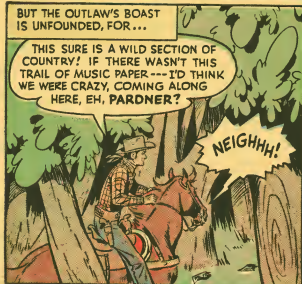
WHO IS THIS STRANGE PASSENGER? WE'LL SOON FIND OUT!

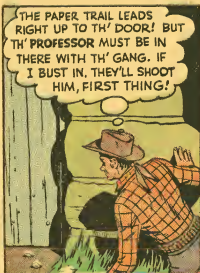


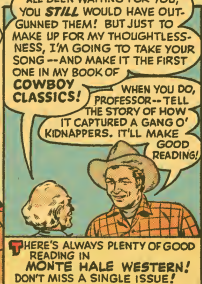
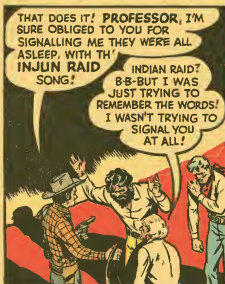
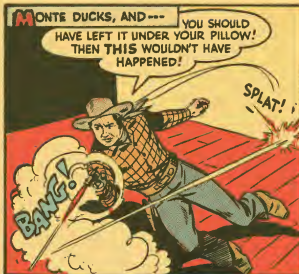
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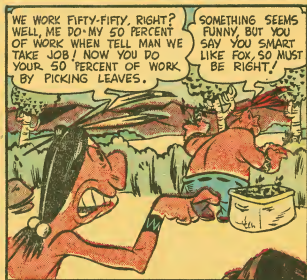
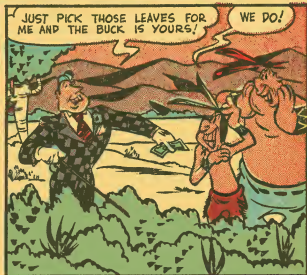
DEAD GIVEAWAY

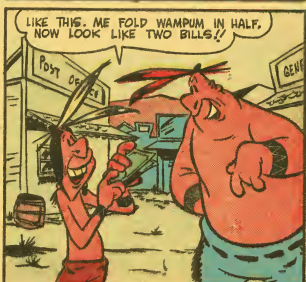
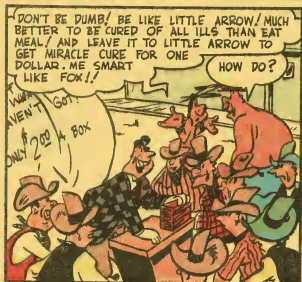
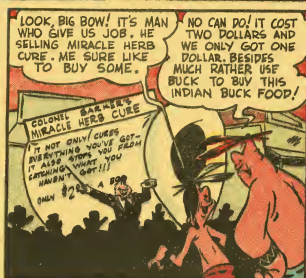
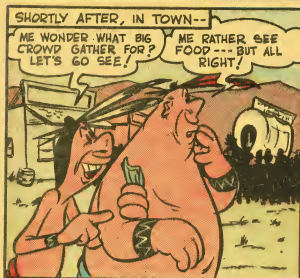
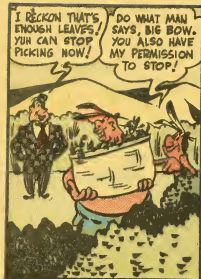


OLD SLICK

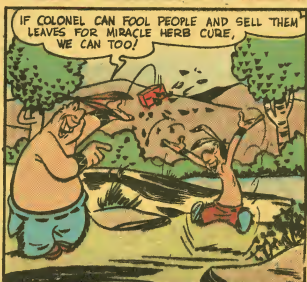
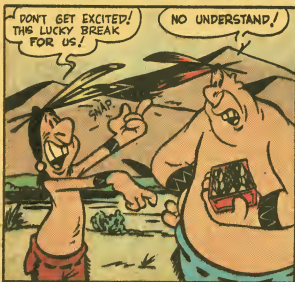
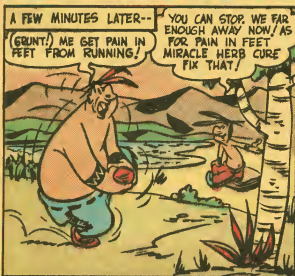
WASHED UP

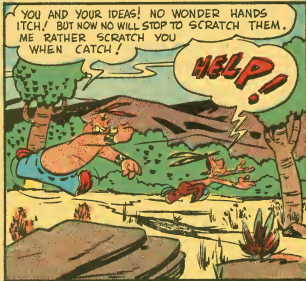
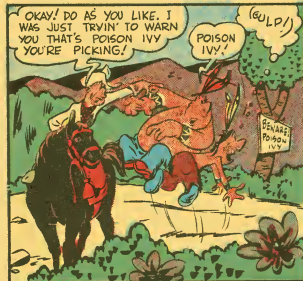
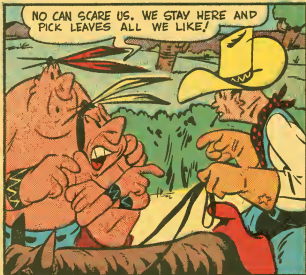






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in

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RUN FER IT!

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RESTING IN THE SHADE OF A SCRUB PINE, JUST BELOW THE PERILOUS BRAZOS PASS...

YOU KNOW, PARDNER, MY EARS HAVE BEEN PLAYING TRICKS ON ME! FOR THE LAST HALF HOUR, I'VE BEEN HEARING STEERS BAWLING AND COWBOYS YELLING! SOUNDS JUST LIKE A BIG CATTLE DRIVE!

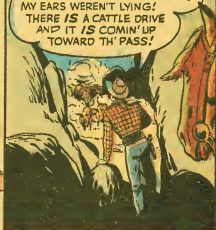


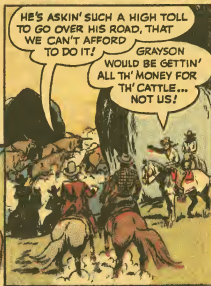
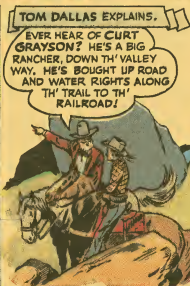
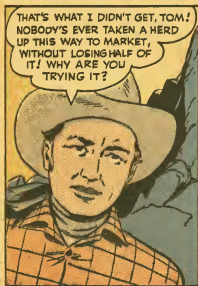
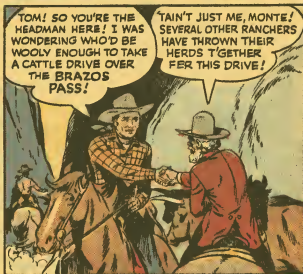
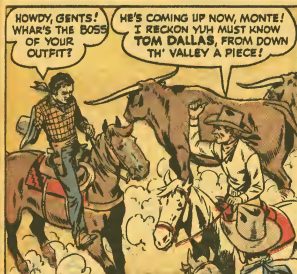
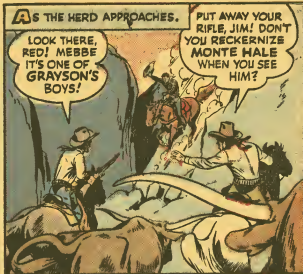
BUT THAT COULDN'T BE! NOBODY BUT A LOCOED COYOTE WOULD TRY TO TAKE A HERD OF CATTLE OVER THE BRAZOS PASS! THAT IS --- UNLESS THEY WERE PART MOUNTAIN GOAT!



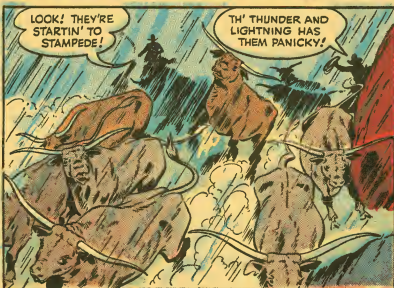
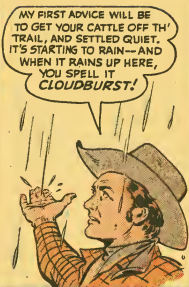
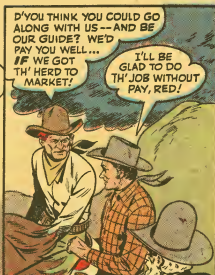
BUT, AS MONTE HALE LOOKS DOWN THE MOUNTAINSIDE...

WELL, I'LL BE **HORN-SWOGGLED!** MY EARS WEREN'T LYING! THERE *IS* A CATTLE DRIVE AND IT *IS* COMIN' UP TOWARD TH' PASS!

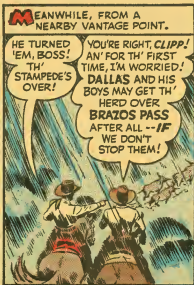
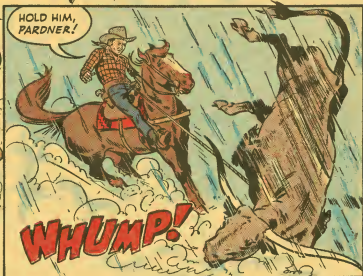
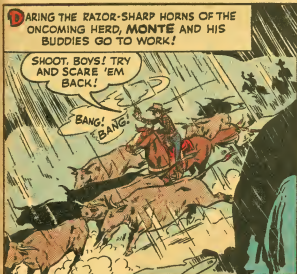


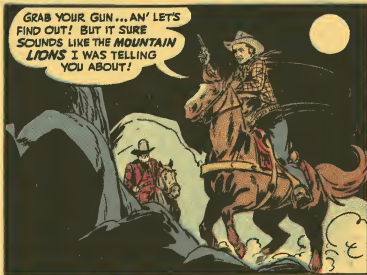
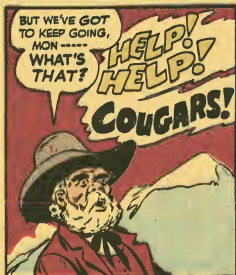


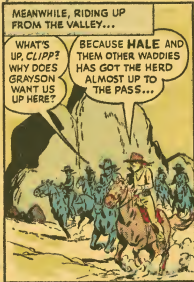
MONTE HALE WESTERN

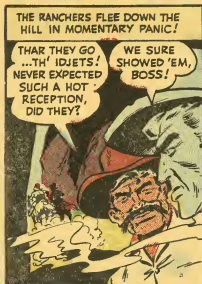
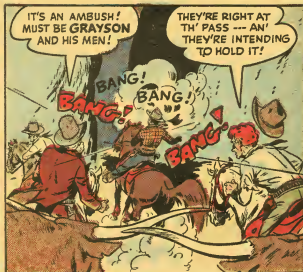
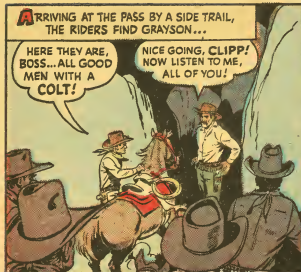


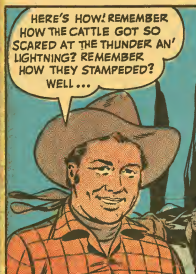
MONTE HALE WESTERN

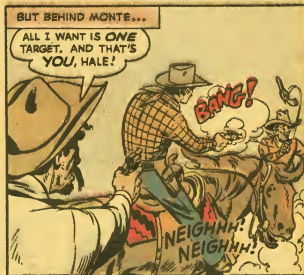
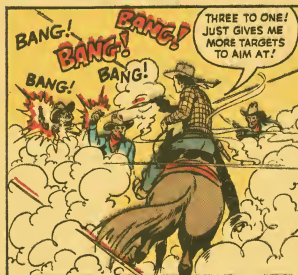












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